





PEBBLES AND BAMM-BAMM Vol. 4, No. 24, February, 1975, published every six weeks by Charlton Publications, Inc., at Charlton Building, Division St., Derby, Conn. 06418. 25é per copy. Subscription \$1.75 annually. Printed in U.S.A. George Wildman, Managing Editor. The stories, characters and incidents portrayed in this periodical are entirely fictitious and no identification with actual persons, living or dead, is intended. This magazine has been produced and sold subject to the restrictions that it shall only be resold at retail as published and at full cover price. It is a violation of these stipulations for this magazine to be offered for sale by any vendor in a mariliated condition, or at less than full cover price. National Advertising Representatives: Dilo, 114 E. 32nd St., New York, N.Y. 10016 (212-686-9050). © 1974 HANNA-BARBERA PROBUCTIONS, INC. International copyright secured. All rights reserved.













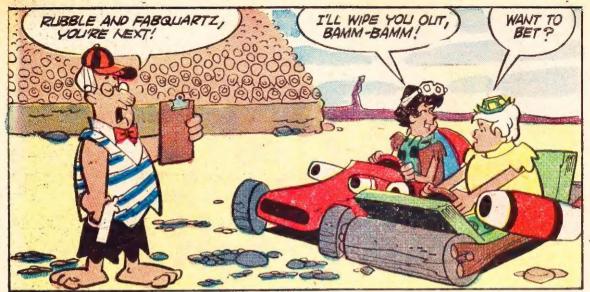




















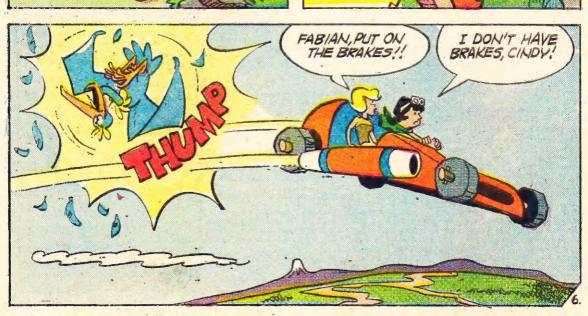
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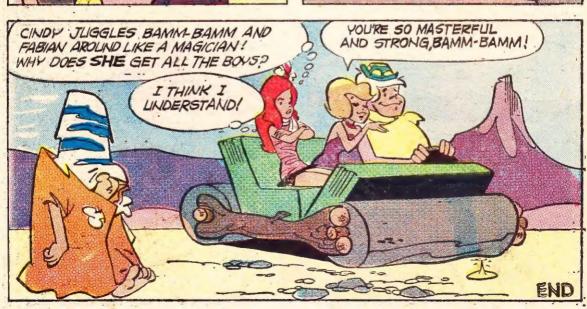


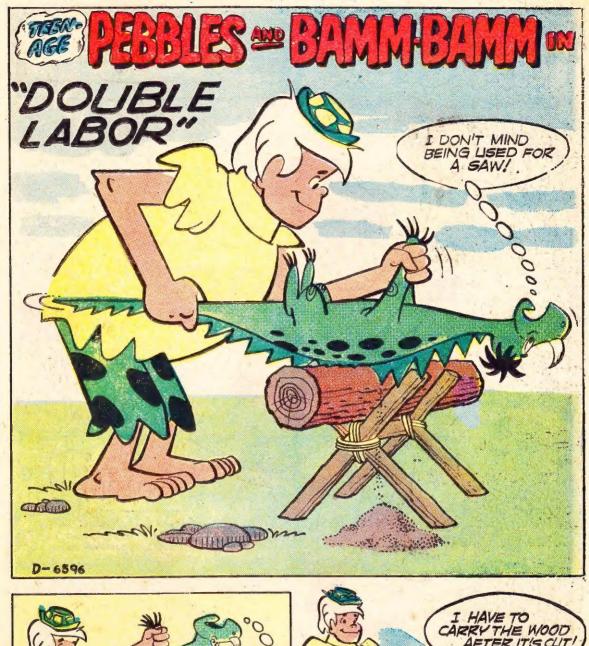






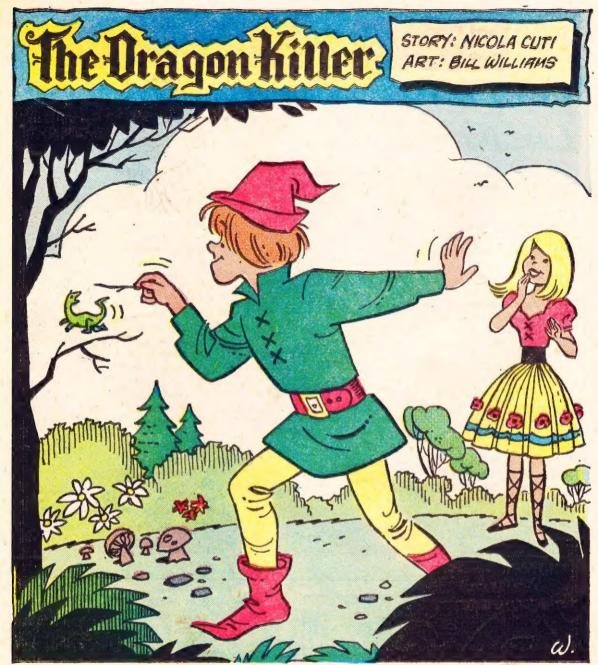












In Merry Old England, when knights roamed the country-side in search of fortune and adventure, there lived a young farmboy called George. Unlike most boys his age, George held no longing desires to become a knight. He was contented to work with his father and mother on the farm and he looked forward to the day when he would have a farm of his own. Fate, however, had decided that George would become a knight and this is how it began.

On a trip into a nearby town, young George was startled by the screams of a maiden, who was obviously in distress. Although he was slight in stature and cautious in nature, George was not a coward and therefore he ran to see if he could aid the girl. To his relief, he discovered that the source of the maiden's

fear was a tiny lizard which he was able to chase away with a twig. The girl was grateful to George and after thanking him for his kindness in coming to her aid they parted company to continue their respective journeys.

That was all there was to the incident, but in town George was talked into joining some friends at the local tavern for a few mugs of ale. They sang and told jokes and then they began to brag of their travels and adventures. George listened for a while until he could no longer endure their tales and in one unguarded moment he said: "I saved a young maid's life, this morning, when I chased away a lizard who was threatening her."

The men continued their conversations except for

George's good friend, Richard, who felt obligated to answer George.

"A lizard," he said. "How big was the lizard?"

"Very big," George answered.

"Sure," said Richard, "but how big? Was it as big as a rat or a dog?"

If he admitted the truth, he knew that Richard would lough at his attempt at bragging so he tried some harmless exaggerating.

"It was at least as large as a basset hound, no ... it was as large as a great dane."

"That was no lizard," said Tom Lonford, who had overheard the conversation. "Any lizard that large would have to be a dragon. Was it covered with scales?"

George couldn't remember but he said that it did seem to have a rough skin.

"It was a dragon alright," said Tom excitedly. "And did it breathe fire?"

With some hesitation, George answered: "Well, its breath was kinda hot,"

Some of the other men in the tavern began to catch snatches of George's words and decided they were worth listening for more.

"Did someone say 'dragon','' asked a tall man with

"Right here," yelled Tom as he waved toward the shy farmboy "My friend, George, slew a dragon as big as a horse. Its teeth were like the prongs of pitchforks and its eyes glowed like the fires of twin lanterns."

Everyone was listening now including the bar keeper who hardly listened to stories anymore.

"Go ahead," insisted Richard. "Tell them about the dragen and don't forget about the girl. She was a princess with a silken gown, brocaded collar and she were jeweled rings on each of her fingers."

But before George could describe the ferocity of the dragon or the beauty of the princess there was a thundering crash from the door and all eyes turned to see the cause of the interruption. There, in the dearway, stood the tallest, most powerful knight that anyone in the tavern had ever seen. He was dressed in black armor, dented from blows received in countless battles, and on his shield was pointed the golden falcen of Sir Callan, the undefeatable.

The tavern was silent as the great knight stroad across the planked floor to where the group of listeners were gathered. They gasped with awe when he



removed his helmet to reveal a scarred face aderned by a mass of curly red hair and thick red beard.

"Who," he said in a booming voice, "is the dragon slayer?"

Accusing heads turned to the frightened farmbay. "I was passing by when I heard the commetion. If you be the dragon slayer, boy, then I challenge you to do battle with me for I have slain over thirty dragons and will not be belittled by a mere child."

The knight walked to the door, replaced his helmet and waited for George to join him.

George did not want to fight the huge knight but a look into his friends' faces and he knew that he had no choice. Apprehensively, he walked to the door. Although he did not do all of the bragging, he allowed it to continue, and so he had to face the results of his inflated pride.

When he was outside, away from the tavern, he admitted the truth to the knight. "I am no dragon slayer, sir. I am what I seem to be, a poor farmboy who is great only in his lying."

Slowly, the knight lifted his visor upon the boy with a stern expression. George prepared himself to be killed but instead he heard laughter from Sir Collan.

"Boy," said the now jolly knight, "I am a liar also. I have only slain twenty dragons."

From that day forth, George became Sir Callan's squire and was someday destined to win fame as St. George, the dragon slayer.

